

REMARKS / DISCUSSION OF ISSUES

Claims 1-4 and 6-12 are pending in the application.

By means of the present amendment, the specification has been amended to include a reference to the Patent No. corresponding to the Parent Application of the present application.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-4, 6-7 and 10-11 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No.5,680,015 (Bernitz), and rejects claims 8-9 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Bernitz. It is respectfully submitted that claims 1-4 and 6-12 are patentable over Bernitz for at least the following reasons.

Bernitz is directed to a method and circuit to operate a discharge lamp. A microprocessor is provided which establishes a test phase of limited time duration during which the frequency of operation of the lamp is varied by frequency modulation within a predetermined range. A voltage enhancement circuit HS is supplied with d-c voltage through a radio noise filter FE and rectifier GL (FIG 1) and rectified current is received over junctions J1, J2. An NMI input 8 of the microprocessor has a synchronization signal derived from the power supply network which, for a 60 Hz power supply, provides a 120 Hz synchronization signal, and is coupled to the output of the bridge rectifier GL, for example to the junction J1.

It is respectfully submitted that Bernitz does not teach or suggest the present invention as recited in independent claim 1, and similarly recited in independent claims 2, 6 and 10-11 which, amongst other patentable elements, recites (illustrative emphasis provided):

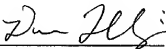
wherein a peak-to-peak value of a voltage signal of the rectified mains voltage having the first frequency depends on a combined capacitance of the first buffer capacitor and the second buffer capacitor.

These features are nowhere disclosed or suggested in Bernitz. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that independent claims 1-2, 6 and 10-11 be allowed. In addition, it is respectfully submitted that claims 3-4, 7-9 and 12 should also be allowed at least based on their dependence from independent claim 1 as well as

their individually patentable elements. Accordingly, separate consideration of each of the dependent claims is respectfully requested.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



Dicran Halajian
Reg. 39,703
Attorney for Applicant(s)
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THORNE & HALAJIAN, LLP
Applied Technology Center
111 West Main Street
Phone: (631) 665-5139
Fax: (631) 665-5101